



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Secretary of Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20230

Call to Action

All communities face potential disruption from natural, technological, and human-caused hazards. These events can take a high toll in lives, livelihoods, and quality of life. In other words, they become disasters. While these events occur on a local or regional level, the connected nature of our modern society means that their effects may be felt throughout the Nation in our economy, the availability of goods and services, and sometimes in the permanent displacement of people from the places they call home.

In fact, our society is in a constant state of adaptation to many factors and is increasingly reliant on an evolving and interconnected network of buildings, energy, communications, transportation, and water and wastewater systems. Because of the consequences and high cost of recovering from disasters, the need for communities to be more resilient is not just a local issue, but is also important at the regional, state, and national levels.

But what does it mean to be resilient? Resilience is the ability to prepare for anticipated hazards, adapt to changing conditions, and withstand and recover rapidly from disruptions. Resilience is not merely “bouncing back” to the prior state when an event occurs. Rather, it means having a plan in place that allows the community to “bounce forward” to a better state. Increased community resilience also provides the benefit of making communities more attractive to business investment and new residents.

This *Community Resilience Planning Guide for Buildings and Infrastructure Systems* (the *Guide*) outlines a practical six-step planning process to help communities establish affordable priorities and allocate resources to improve their resilience. It begins by characterizing current social and economic systems and needs—like education, health care, business, as well as the need for food, shelter, and water—in the context of their importance to the community, and the extent of disruption that can be tolerated before there are detrimental effects. The *Guide* helps communities develop their performance goals for the hazards to which they are exposed. These goals determine when buildings and infrastructure systems should recover their functions to support community resilience goals. With the *Guide*, community leaders can incorporate resilience-driven, short- and long-term goals into their existing plans in order to preserve and enhance economic competitiveness.

I urge every community to use the *Guide* to support its own long-term goals and to make our Nation more resilient and competitive.

Sincerely,

Penny Pritzker
U.S. Secretary of Commerce